

Cultural Influences, Cultural Differences, and Psychopathy

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Abstract: Along with the booming of psychopathic research, cross-cultural generalisability on psychopathy arose. Considering the number of potential justifications for cultural differences, however, the generalisable conclusions remained a puzzle. Little attention had been paid to psychopathy with regard to the impact of cultural differences and similarities. In this paper, we provide an overview of how cultures have influenced psychopathic individuals and present an introduction to cultural psychology and psychopathy. We display and analyze the current situation in the field and come up with guidance for future studies.

Keywords: Psychopathy, Cross-cultural, Multicultural, Cultural psychology

1. Introduction

Cultural psychology emerging in the 1990s believed that human psychology and the historical factors in the cultural environment complement each other. Therefore, the historical background is bound to be shaped by the cultural world in which people live. Cultural groups may have great differences in their psychological views on what is true, good, and effective. The study of cultural differences combines psychology and the developmental perspective of human history to understand a society's iconic model of beliefs, behaviors, and historical institutions.

In early psychological research, it was believed that psychological characteristics originated from biological instincts, and those cultural and historical aspects were mere appendages that satisfied human instincts. Boaz, the father of American cultural anthropology, found that it is not genetic factors but cultural factors that determine human behavior through long-term practical comparison of human beings living in different historical backgrounds. Therefore, he proposed the theory that culture is the decisive factor in personality [1]. Since then, social historians have been involved in psychoanalysis.

From a psychological point of view, there are some subtle but important differences. Throughout the long history of mankind, every nation has its own religion, so the role of religious values is particularly important for the development of history in the various elements affecting mental health. On the research surface, mental illness is very closely linked to religious culture. There are symptoms of mental illness called religious delusion. This symptom is a pathological, persuasive belief about religion. There is also the study that religious culture influences the group's attitudes, help-seeking behavior, and psychological treatment in primitive ethnic groups, compared to non-religious people [2].

Due to the influence of historical changes and development, the ethnic minorities in the multi-ethnic countries in the world have different customs. China is a populous country in multi-ethnic countries, the role

of the customs through the family to the individual initial socialization process has a profound influence, this is because China as a whole is influenced by Confucianism. Confucianism is essentially a relationship philosophy, emphasizing father and son, husband and wife, monarch, children, and harmony; it reflects the importance of family responsibility. Family is the first place for children to learn in their early life. Children learn the initial social knowledge, skills, and moral values in the family. No matter in a country, the ethnic minorities are usually the vulnerable ethnic groups. Compared with the mainstream culture, the ethnic minorities are weak after their economic development. In these areas, especially for girls, their psychological ideas and thinking patterns are formed in the family. Relevant research shows that the emphasis on family interests and non-individual rights are the prominent characteristics of Chinese psychological concept orientation. Take the Chinese Tibetan as an example. In the family, few elders can teach them to read the classic anthology, and they can only use some simple language to educate their children in their daily life. Children who grow up in this atmosphere will not realize what kind of person they will be or believe in what historical views in the future. They will only ask themselves to be a person who follows social ethics and obtains a better afterlife. Qiaqia is the unconscious state of this religious culture, which creates the cultural atmosphere of religious faith. Usually, in these ethnic areas, individual behavior integrates with religious beliefs and the history of the nation, leading to many taboos of social behavior, and has a certain social binding force, forming the psychology of satisfying the status quo and compliance. The particularity of this national psychology promotes its special life and behavior habits.

For western history, modern western psychological concepts mainly originated from Christian ideology and ancient Greek philosophy. Western history and culture influence the psychological concepts of European and American people: people are born free but restricted by each other, and the dignity of individuals depends on whether the natural power such as life, freedom, and property can be effectively protected. From the perspective of the historical and moral view of western culture, individuals have the right to choose their own way of life and can pursue their personal value goals independently [3]. These basic religious concepts are closely tied to the definition of man. Since the ontological thought in western cultural tradition emphasizes the independence and non-sociality of individuals, different from China, it always believes that the social relationship of the same individual established by the same position is only in a secondary position relative to the individual itself. Therefore, under the influence of western religious ideas, people have the psychological characteristics of individualism and self-interest to a large extent.

Are all psychopaths identical to each other? Not necessarily. In the past century, a large number of studies and research were conducted to examine the variations among psychopaths. Within various explanations of why psychopathy differs so much, a new perspective suggests that Psychopathy may be influenced by cultural factors. Over time, research dedicated to specific ethnic or cultural groups reinforces the significance of cultural influences on psychopathy. Differences in Cultural-specific behaviors can potentially lead to varying forms of psychopathy. For instance, a study demonstrated that the most common psychopathic traits in the middle east differ from that in the States [4]. Culture shapes personalities, and personalities influence psychological as well as mental health. Diving into this topic can deepen our understanding of psychopathy, providing a brand new perspective that can possibly bring us new solutions to unanswered questions.

In the following main body and summary paragraphs, we will divide into different parts, diverge from the central argument, and then summarize the response theme, reasonably predict the future direction, and give some suggestions to sublimate the theme. The main part is divided into four parts, ranging from differences in racial/ethnic identity to regional historical ecological climate differences, social dynamic differences, and ideological differences such as individualism and collectivism, covering history, sociology, geography, philosophy, and other fields, clearly listed and specifically analyzed the arguments of the theme of our article and will summarize the common points of the existing research we have explored so far, so as to discover and produce future research directions in this area, and propose Reasonable, valid and constructive research recommendations.

2. Psychopathy and Cultural Differences Derived from Difference in Racial/Ethnic Identities

Much of the existing literature on racial differences contributing to certain cultural differences in people with psychosis raises the idea that racial differences have a large impact on cultural differences in people with

mental illness, both positively and negatively. Under this view, the influence of internal and external factors, the positive and negative outputs, are full of different disputes between these elements.

For example, Fanti et al. proposed definitions of cultural and racial differences in psychopaths and presented basic rates, averages, and some prevalence of psychotic knowledge [5]. Using Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R) measurements first, a sample of psychopaths in adult prisons and a sample of incarcerated adolescent psychopaths were selected as experimental participants. Some characteristics of psychopaths are found, they cannot control their violent behavior, and the difference in race gives them some special elements of their own race, which make them take on some identities that are different from others, very special. This last point echoes the theme that race has a major influence on psychopathic culture.

But at the same time, we can find deeper effects of race on psychopaths, such as positive effects below negative ones. An article characterizes racial and ethnic differences in psychotic personality and divides the study population into three categories [6]. The first was blacks and Native Americans with biased test values, while the third was whites with lower test values. Of the 16 measures of psychotic personality, the second was Hispanic, and the test values for that type of race remained in the middle, with values ranked from largest to smallest, Black and American in the expression. Indigenous peoples first, then Hispanics, then whites and British, Indo-South Asians from Canada and South Africa, and finally East Asians. A careful analysis of these values shows that the unemployment rate of whites is relatively low, about 10, but the value of blacks has reached 24, while the value of Hispanics is in the middle, maintaining a state of 14. This unemployment has a great impact on people's quality of life, lifestyle, and even cognition and values. Including differences in IQ, that is, genetic development, blacks and Native Americans will have slightly lower values, making them less able to use empathic methods or to develop their own cognitions and values, which can negatively affect psychopaths. But at the same time, this racial disparity also has a certain positive effect on the mentally ill. For example, in the right racial background, white people will get some preferential treatment in a certain background because of their own race, so that white people can better develop themselves and treat mentally ill patients. So, in conclusion, the authors argue that racial differences have a strong influence on cultural differences in psychopaths.

In general, our articles on racial differences in various professional papers, journals, or books have pointed out that racial differences lead to certain cultural differences in mentally ill people. It will also include two aspects of research exploration, one positive and one negative. First, the negative effects are obvious. Black and Native American values can embody this negative impact, creating some social ethos and some racism. Second, positive effects are also included. For example, these groups live in a white environment, and they happen to be white, and they will be treated very well and can alleviate the degree of psychosis somewhat better.

3. Psychopathy and Cultural Differences Derived from ECOLOGY

As surprising as it sounds, a correlation exists between ecology and mental health. The climate, as well as the landform, are found to be highly crucial to the diversion of psychopathy among regions and cultures. Moreover, ecology plays a major role in shaping cultures, creating culture-specific aspects such as homogeneity, complexity, individualism, and collectivism. These can eventually influence the development of personalities, creating culture-related traits and mindsets. Accordingly, psychopathy will take on different forms among cultures. Till today, many studies have been conducted to examine psychopathy in specific regions in order to detect these differences. This section will be centered on how ecology itself as well as its impact on culture shape personalities and influence psychopathy.

The association between the climate and people's mental health & personality has long been studied. In the past decades, examinations have led to the conclusion that increasing ambivalent temperatures, heatwaves, rising sea levels as well as extreme weather can result in increased psychological distress [7]. From 1996 to 2013, a group of researchers dedicated to the correlation between global warming and crime rate in Finland [8]. Their study shows that ambivalent temperatures resulted in a 10% of variance in the crime rate, with a 1.7% crime rate per degree centigrade. Among these offenses, people with mental issues and psychopathic traits have seen an increase over years.

In the biological scope, the serotonin system is responsible for most violent behaviors [8]. Ambivalent temperatures, humidity, and variation in the amount of sunlight are found to be associated with serotonin 5-

HT (5-hydroxytryptamine) functions. 5HT, along with 5HIAA (5-hydroxyindole acetic acid) levels are associated with impulsive violence as well as violent suicide. These chemicals correspond with items of the PCLR list—poor behavior control, impulsive and adult anti-social behaviors. This explains the positive correlation between warm weather, high humidity, an increasing amount of psychopathic individuals, and a higher crime rate.

Additionally, landform should also be taken into consideration. As said, the amount of sunlight received is in correlation with certain psychopathic behaviors. This is because light triggers chemical reactions in human brains to generate happiness and alertness. The lack of light will result in an excess of melatonin, which makes humans tired and less alert. Therefore, in regions further away from the equator, the low levels of sunlight can disrupt brain functions and lead to the feeling of seasonal depression. According to research, high levels of depression and Psychopathy are highly associated [9]. In fact, secondary psychopathy can be a predictor of depression. The reduced interest in life and depressed feelings can also potentially trigger the development of psychopathy. Furthermore, the culture-specific customs & behaviors which correspond with landforms can also result in different forms of psychopathy. In a way, landform influence the mainstream of cultural thinking. For instance, China's wide range of terrain provided bases for its variety of lifestyles and customs. This diversity in China resulted in a long-lasting value system that emphasizes embracing others and selflessness. Thus, the collectivism of china is found to be in negative correlation with maladaptive aspects of psychopathy (affective/interpersonal and behavioral). Landform and culture are in a mutual relationship, which together shapes personalities, leading to an influence on the form of psychopath presented.

4. Psychopathy and Cultural Differences Derived from Social Dynamics

When the topic shifts to societal norms in each culture, the plausible reasons for cross-cultural differences are multifarious, including cultural factors, migration, inter-rater effects, legal systems, sociocultural contexts, and moral rules.

One of Moleiro et al.'s aims was to find out whether the environment is more effective on psychopaths or not [10]. The researchers examined the influences of autonomy-connectedness (AC) in collectivistic cultures with respect to self-awareness, sensitivity to others, and capacity to manage new situations using the Autonomy-Connectedness Scale (ACS-30) questionnaire between Portuguese and Portuguese immigrants. In Study II, they came to a deduction that was against the hypothesis: residents in the same cultural context would probably present similar characteristics, no matter which regions those immigrants formerly belong to. In particular, the female participants displayed higher scores than males. The study is supportive of the present review paper because it established a foundation of cross-cultural studies by bringing up the connection between AC traits and acculturation processes.

As for the disturbance of the inter-rater effect, Cooke concluded that generalisability could form as a response to the congruent psychopathic constructs though the difference between Scottish and American prisoners was not necessarily the result of rater bias. In another study, Cooke, Hart, and Michie examined the hypothesis of whether rater effects contribute to the differences between psychopathy across nations [11-12]. They recruited 20 raters, 10 Scottish and 10 Canadian, and analyzed the results given after they watched certain interview videotapes of psychopaths. The researchers found no obvious distinction between the samples and concluded that the cross-cultural differences might display in psychopathic individuals' expressions rather than other observable factors. Specifically, psychopaths from North America received generally higher scores on the PCL-R than those of European samples.

Noticeably, one unique study stands out, offering an alternative explanation. After reviewing explanations from previous studies of cross-cultural psychopathy, Wernke and Huss from Creighton University ran a study to substantiate the hypothesis that legal systems are responsible for the divergent rates of psychopathy among countries [13]; that is, a country's population and its prison size would affect the percentage of psychopaths among the amount of imprisoned individuals. Considering the fact that few studies had used samples other than white people, the authors focused on the comparison between European countries and the United States. By cross-referencing numerous studies regarding several aspects of legal systems, the authors concluded a number of firm differences between American and European psychopathy based on legislative variations, ranging from how changes in policies affect the population of incarcerated inmates to types of crimes that psychopaths are more likely to commit than non-psychopaths. Furthermore, American psychopaths have a

greater chance to go to jail for particular violent acts but Europeans have a striking higher victimization rate than the U.S.; the criminal population of American psychopaths is possibly higher than that in Europe. What made this study differ from other theories (e.g.: cultural factors, migration, and sampling differences) is that it took the inherent variances into account, factors that are irrelevant to cultural differences. However, it is noticeable that more studies are needed for higher accuracy of data and broader sources of samples to support this novel theory. In addition, further studies should also consider factors like how different treatments for psychopaths might lead to different consequences, the advantages and disadvantages of court systems in recognizing psychopathic individuals, and the likelihood of crimes psychopaths tend to commit. Overall, people should pay more attention to cross-cultural research and explore more unknowns to fill the gap in this field.

Sociologically, cultural differences are the result of people's experience of living and participating in different socio-cultural environments. Sanchez-Burks et al. inquired into Chinese-Canadians or Mexican-Americans, to verify the assumption that whether bicultural groups exhibit psychological patterns that are intermediate between their home country (in this case: China or Mexico) and their newly adopted culture (Canada or the United States) [1]. Experimental evidence also suggests (in some areas) significant cultural differences between different regions of society, for example, between individuals from the north and south of the United States. Insulting a person's reputation is a relatively temporary annoyance to northerners, but a more serious insult to southerners, who are generally less tolerant of violence than northerners.

5. Psychopathy and Cultural Differences Derived from Ideologies

Individualistic-collectivistic frames of mind are undoubtedly a mainstream of cross-cultural classification. As a pioneering figure in cross-cultural psychopathy who proposed the cultural dimensions theory, Hofstede hypothesized human behaviors as the consequence of mental programming and divided it into three categories: universal, collective, and individual, respectively from the bottom to the top [14]. He stated that a person's mental programs are the response to one's biological formation, and the individual tends to manifest one's mental programs through behaviors. This speculation enhanced the inseparable bond between one's genetic factors (internal) to their behavioral expression (external). Observing and recording one's behavior became an easier path for researchers to study one's brain. What we do reflects what we think. In addition, Hofstede considered collectivistic and individualistic traits as the foremost dimension of the cross-cultural thinking structure, whereas he had investigated over forty countries and drew his conclusion [14].

As it turns out, the orientation of individualism and collectivism is another approach to address a sketchy Eastern and Western boundary. That is also the reason why many researchers in this field chose their participants. One of these researches, conducted by Angela and Robert [15], investigated China as the representative of collectivistic culture, and Greek for individualism. Chinese culture is believed to have shaped many Eastern ideas, emphasizing obligations to others and the importance of groups, while Greek culture, which advocated shaping many Western styles of thought, emphasized independent institutions. The Greeks emphasized rules and analysis of parts, while the Chinese emphasized continuity and dialectical thinking as if contradictions could be resolved harmoniously. They came to the conclusion that cultural differences in cognitive styles are considered to be based on differences in overall and analytical information processing styles, as well as differences in the level of areas and objects of concern.

Beyond question, the study of cross-cultural psychopathy is mere a shallow one, it is possible because people now pay more attention to psychopaths than before due to the development of medical recognition of psychopathy as a personality disorder than other weirdo sayings. Then, as Hare's traits of psychopaths are now a worldly consistent view, it is easier now to recruit members from each culture region. And by promoting communication technology, this era enables cross-cultural psychology to exist in an effective way. In Cooke's study about psychopathy [16], he assumed that individualistic individuals tend to process the characteristics such as glibness, superficiality, grandiosity, promiscuity, multiple marital relationships, and irresponsibility while collectivistic individuals display lesser the above traits. He suspected that individualistic societies are prone to produce people with a risk possibility of being psychopaths. Cooke implied that individualism could be a major cause contributing to psychopathy [17]. Compared with collectivism, individualistic societies emphasize competition, self-confidence, and independence. Mealey claimed that competitiveness plays a major role in supporting psychopathic traits. Sanchez asserts that cultures that incorporate individualistic

accounts are nourishment for psychopathy [18-19]. He and Lasch both agreed on the idea that people who grow up in individualistic cultures tend to have a predisposition to be narcissistic [20]. Studies from prototypical individualistic and collectivistic nations confirmed these assertions.

Shou Y. et al., paid a closer visit to the association between psychopathy and the collectivistic-individualistic dimension, using two different questionnaires for a total of 636 Eastern and Western volunteers [21]. The results were mostly the same as the hypotheses and corresponded with previous studies: positive correlations between individualism and dialectical self-concept with regard to psychopathic behaviors, negative correlations between collectivism and Zhongyong thinking with regard to maladaptive traits. Interestingly, psychopathic individuals to a great extent do not vary much in respect to their demographic differences. This strongly indicates that the major factor undertaking the differences among psychopathic individuals could be depending on how one thinks. As a matter of fact, how one thinks leans towards the environment. Mass studies had shown that people tend to believe what their caregivers are into; they usually fail to acknowledge the importance of the surrounding environment. This corresponds to Hofstede's definition of culture: "the interactive aggregate of common characteristics that influence a human group's response to its environment" [14], and its intimate relationship with personality, which could explain the intention of using personality tests in multicultural experiments. Though firm evidence had accounted for the differences between cultural thinking and psychopathy, there is still no definite conclusion that is able to vindicate the origins of psychopathy completely on the environment.

6. Conclusion

Modern culture and psychological research basically connect different cultures with research objects. Understanding one's mind is not only a full-time job in scientific and psychological research but also a psychological exploration. Psychological boundaries are developed and flowing, and there are other traditions that understand people's minds, which also shows that multicultural traditions coexist and have the possibility of integration. Cognitive psychology should be analyzed and studied from the different existences of the subject and object, and specific problems should be analyzed.

It is evident that studies regarding the multitudinous cultural background of psychopathy are just a start. The lack of guiding studies or models is a crucial problem, which led to a disorganized situation in the field of cross-cultural studies of psychopathy. Yet many conclusions had been made, and the edge of the field is unpredictable. It is hard for us to draw an all-rounded generalized conclusion as well. The lack of dominant models and approved theories is a major problem in the field. Many studies are limited in the number of samples and cases, inefficiently to form any generalisability, from which often were restricted to white people, adults, males, and prisoners. Other limitations would be the inconsistency of measuring, negligence of confounding variables, potential bias caused by only one measure of psychopathy (self-report questionnaires such as PCL-R), loose sampling, disproportional gender balance, and exclusive information-gathering measure and statistical analysis method.

The need for improvement in future studies is urged in mostly every piece of work. Cooke et al. inferred that the self-report scores were not comparable and future studies need to take into more consideration [22]; Nichollas and Petrila mentioned a potential difference between male and female psychopaths with respect to their expressions and underlined the necessity to draw a line of generalisability between different cultural contexts in future studies [23]; Wilson et al. suggested that future studies are required to show a clearer distinction between narcissistic personality and psychopathic traits, inmates and forensic samples, males and females, and drug users and non-users [24]. By the same token, Verhulst and Achenbach derived a series of procedures for cross-cultural comparisons, enabling future studies to take advantage and expand on [25]. When considering cultural factors, Chen, Mak, and Lam suggested that future studies should fill up the gap in cross-cultural psychology by using longitudinal experiments to manipulate variables [26]. It is a referential study to consider since it shed light on individual cultural differences due to societal norms, forming a feasible basis for the study of cultural influences and psychopathy.

As far as the relationship between culture and psychology is concerned, people should start with culture, examine psychology with culture, and understand the significance of its history, religion, society, geographical location, etc. Cultural and historical deconstruction of mainstream psychology is the basis of psychological innovation; exploring other traditions and methods that can be selected is the key to psychological innovation;

and seeking differences, balances, and integration between different cultures is the goal of psychological innovation.

Acknowledgments

All authors contributed equally to this work and should be considered co-first authors.

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